

POLI 387—American Political Thought
Fall, 2016

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Hours: Thursday 11-3

“I think that in no country in the civilized world is less attention paid to philosophy than in the United States.”

--Alexis de Toqueville, *Democracy in America, Vol 2, Chapter 1.*

[Riches are]...”A gift from heaven signifying, “This is my beloved son, in whom I am well pleased.”

--attributed to John D. Rockefeller (from Ambrose Bierce, “*The Devil’s Dictionary of Quotes*”)

*O, let America be America again—
The land that never has been yet--
--Langston Hughes*

This is a course on American political thought. The above quote from de Toqueville should signal to you that we certainly have had some deep and brilliant political *thinkers*, we have had few political *theorists* (save perhaps John Calhoun in the nineteenth century and John Rawls in the twentieth. We have been far more inclined to be *doers* than develop any systematic political theory. We pride ourselves on our system of government. Historians have continually argued where the base ideas for our system came from, but there can be little doubt that much came European political theorists. The idea of natural rights evolved from the writings of Thomas Hobbes (1588-1650), addressed by John Locke (1632-1704). It is no secret that the Declaration of Independence is based on Locke’s claim that all men are naturally entitled to ‘life, liberty and the pursuit of property’ though Jefferson, Franklin, (Roger) Sherman, (John) Adams, and Robert Livingston changed ‘pursuit of property’ to ‘pursuit of happiness.’ Less well known is that Baron de Montesquieu, Charles-Louis de Secondat (1689-1755) proposed a political system that had a separation of powers between legislative, executive, and judicial branches as a means of the potential for a tyrannical government (if power corrupts, then absolute power corrupts absolutely).

This is a survey type course, even though advanced. Thus, I start with a confession that putting it together is (for me) an exercise in frustration. Your book is long and disjointed in the sense that it follows a simple chronology of writers. In my (humble) estimation, it also includes quite a few that, while significant figures in our history, did not contribute very much to our political thought. Still, setting this course up is sad in the sense of having to leave out many who are worth at least some attention. On the other hand, it excludes others I think important. Notable among those is John Locke, Alexis de Toqueville and Herman Melville. I include Locke in your readings because his ideas appear to be the foundation of thinking for many of our own Founders. I include de Toqueville because no American thinker comes close to his insights—save perhaps Robert Putnam and his well-known book, *Bowling Alone*. I include Melville because his political thinking was deep—but he is overlooked since his instrument of delivery

was fiction. Thus, this syllabus reflects a selective set of readings from the text that will be supplemented by outside readings.

If we do have a political philosophy it is embedded in pragmatism which for many amounts to a sort of ‘anti-philosophy.’ But even saying this is problematic because of how the term is commonly used versus how Charles Sanders Pierce actually developed it in the 1870s. The word "pragmatism" as a piece of technical terminology in philosophy refers to a specific set of associated philosophical views. However, the phrase is often confused with "pragmatism" in the context of politics (which refers to politics or diplomacy based primarily on practical considerations, rather than ideological notions) and with a non-technical use of "pragmatism" in ordinary contexts referring to dealing with matters in one's life realistically and in a way that is based on practical rather than abstract considerations.

Liberalism has certainly been embedded in our political thinking. But non-liberal threads of Puritan moralism persist even today. These are in evidence in our attitude towards the deeply divisive issue of abortion, how we see the poor and disadvantaged, and how many view gay and lesbian relationships. Also the base idea of liberalism has never helped us figure out how limited our government should be—a fact never more evident than now in an age of globalization and multi-national corporations. And even though liberalism envisions mankind as highly individualistic, it has never completely refuted strong undercurrents of communitarianism. This is evident today in Donald Trump's efforts to identify “us” and our common interests versus “them” and the threat they pose to us.

There are some themes and problems that have persisted in our political thinking. One is the idea of *American exceptionalism*. There are any number of ways to see this—from the idea of *manifest destiny* to our modern confusion about the refusal of middle easterners to embrace our liberalism.

But some things have changed. The notion of the liberal democratic state has mutated to include some aspects of the modern welfare state. We also have to deal with a nation that has evolved from the days when the Constitution was written by 55 white, aristocratic men into a multi-cultural one with very diverse groups demanding political recognition and voice. Coupled to this, we have been unable to put the issue of racism and discrimination behind us, despite what are for most the best of intentions. Finally, we have exhausted our idea that we are a frontier nation where it is possible to take up roots and move to a place and ‘start all over again’ and there is an endless supply of land. (Not that we do not have vast amounts of relatively unpopulated states, but things such as our social security number, public record, and vast amounts of information gleaned by both our government and private organizations cannot be left behind in seeking a new start.)

In this course, we will examine some of our significant political thinkers. That list is by no means comprehensive and many are left out by the necessity of structuring the course for a semester and my desire that you read the assignments carefully and also (hopefully) do just a bit of digging your own. The list is narrowed even more by the irony of needing to include two non-Americans, John Locke and Alexis de Toqueville. De Toqueville's observations on us, our social and political mores and norms, remain relevant after nearly two centuries. His *Democracy in America* (1835) is still frequently quoted for its insights into us as a nation/people.

Many who teach political theory and especially political philosophy see a great deal of value in students' reading original texts. I very much appreciate that approach, but also know

that reading original literature is difficult. There are inevitable issues with language, words, phrasing, sentence structure and the like

The learning goals for this course are as follows:

- You understand the facets of our liberal, democratic ideas have shaped our public institutions.
- You gain a deeper understanding of how we have connected the idea of private property and individualism and the way these affect our thinking about fundamental aspects of government such as taxation, welfare, and even environmentalism.
- You understand the religious and secular influence of Protestantism in our political thinking and how these have evolved, yet persisted.
- You understand the more or less persistent tension between our idea of Jeffersonian democracy on the one hand and Hamiltonian federalism on the other. This is especially important in seeing how it has influenced our thinking about states' rights—what is undoubtedly the singular, most important political problem we have faced and continue to face as a nation.
- You have a summary understanding of the role that political dissent has played in our nation—especially in the role of feminist and African-American thinkers.

A brief personal note: The approach I have taken in this course is one that assumes some (perhaps most of you may be familiar with the names of many of the thinkers we address, but your understanding is summary. Some may know more, even quite a bit, about individual thinkers. I invite those who do to become a co-teacher, correcting me when I am wrong and/or providing detail where they think it relevant.

My approach also assumes that some of you know American history in broad fashion but not with any detail/precision. Without taking a completely historicist position, it is still important in many instances that you understand the times and events in which political thinkers recorded their thoughts. I will therefore make every effort to “contextualize” thinkers with respect to their specific times.

In preparation for the class, please read *The Declaration of Independence* and the *Constitution along with Amendments*

Locke's book can be purchased, but also is available online @ <http://lonang.com/library/reference/locke-two-treatises-government/>

All assignments are from *Book II: AN ESSAY CONCERNING THE TRUE ORIGINAL, EXTENT AND END OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT [THE “SECOND ESSAY”]*

**I have ordered one text:
American Political Thought 7th Revised ed. Edition
by Michael S. Cummings (Editor)**

Course topics, assignments, by class/date.

1 24-Aug Wed

Introduction to Course

Orienting to American History
Key Concepts

2 29-Aug Mon

Puritan/Religious Thought

Read: Cummings: Chapters 1-4

Also read:

Which of the 11 American nations do you live in?

At: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/govbeat/wp/2013/11/08/which-of-the-11-american-nations-do-you-live-in/>

General Guidance:

The fact that some want legislation/constitutional changes such that gays cannot legally marry shows a strong moral (usually religiously based) sentiment among some that exists even today (despite court rulings). Consider as well the Hobby Lobby suit on providing insurance policies that fund abortions. The Puritans clearly held the view that political institutions can and should enforce moral standards. Still, a common saying today is “you can’t legislate morality.” Can we? Why or why

3 31-Aug Wed

Liberals

Read: *A State of Nature*

By Andre Munroe

Available at:

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/state-of-nature-political-theory>

Read: John Locke

Second Essay in *Two Treatises on Government*

Chapters I – IX

Available at:

<http://socserv2.socsci.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3ll3/locke/government.pdf>

General Guidance

Though our Declaration of Independence states a belief that our Creator has granted us the right to “Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness,” Locke’s version clearly reads “Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Property” and often we mistakenly say this (instead of “happiness”). Especially as it was motivated by Shay’s Rebellion, our Founder’s could arguably have written the Constitution with as much or more an eye on the protection of property as protection of life or liberty. Indeed, Madison states in Federalist #10 . . . “the most common and durable source of (political) factions has been the various and unequal distribution of property. Those who hold and those who are without property have ever formed distinct interests in society.” When the country was founded, many localities and states required property ownership as a qualification to be able to vote.

4 5-Sep Mon

Early Radicals

Read: Cummings, Chapters 6, 7 & 8

Also read Thomas Paine: *Agrarian Justice*

Available at:

<https://www.ssa.gov/history/paine4.html>

General Guidance

This is a bit of a hodgepodge in readings. One major point to think about is the right to revolt. This shrinks down to the right (or obligation) to practice civil disobedience—an idea we will pick up. Slavery is of course another issue—one already present before the Revolution. Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* is considered a sort-of classic for the revolutionary times—and it had a widespread impact as propaganda. It was not an example of deep political thought. After the Revolution Paine went to France (where he came close to the guillotine) and wrote some truly radical stuff. His most radical was *Agrarian Justice* (1797). *The Age of Reason* was important as well in terms of articulating an Enlightenment idea of religion.

5 7-Sep Wed

Creating Institutions

Read Cummings, Chapters 9, 10, 11, & 12

General Guidance

Everyone should read The Declaration, The Articles, and the Constitution. For the latter, focus on Congressional and Presidential powers—and be prepared to discuss the issue of the vagueness of the Constitution. Also focus on the Bill of Rights, the 13th, 14th, 15th, and 24th Amendments. Abigail was a brilliant council to John and without her he likely would not have been successful.

6 12-Sep Mon

Federalists

Read Cummings, Chapter 13

General Guidance

Many (including me) consider *Federalist #10* to be one of the most important political documents in our history. Here's also a chance to take a look and Alexander Hamilton who for some reason appears to be quite popular these days.

7 14-Sep Wed

Anti-Federalists
Read Cummings, Chapters 14 & 15

General Guidance

Look at the arguments. Which have perhaps become more true than the Federalists were willing to admit as a possibility? Another shot at Hamilton.

8 19-Sep Mon

Rule of Law and Powers of the Federal Government
Read Cummings, Chapter 18 (note we are skipping chapters 16 & 17)

General Guidance

In reading these, think about the fact that Great Britain has no (written) Constitution. The two most important SCOTUS decisions in our history. Sets the stage. We'll talk about other cases as well...in the context of *Marbury*. Should SCOTUS "make" policy?

9 21-Sep Wed

The View From Outside

Alexis de Toqueville: *Democracy in America*

The book was written in French and since its publication has been translated several times.

Please use this online source for the readings:

http://xroads.virginia.edu/~hyper/detoc/toc_indx.html

Read

Volume 1: Chapter III: Social Condition of the Anglo-Americans

Volume 2: Section 1: Chapter X: Why the Americans are More Addicted to the Practical than to Theoretical Science, Chapter VIII: How Equality Suggests to the Americans the Indefinite Perfectibility of Man,

Section 2:

Volume 2: Section 2: Chapter I: Why Democratic Nations Show a more Ardent and Enduring Love of Equality than of Liberty. Chapter V: Of the Use Which the Americans Make of Public Associations in Civil Life, Chapter IX: Why the Example of the Americans Does Not Prove That a Democratic People Can Have No Aptitude or Taste for Science, Literature, or the Arts, Chapter XVI: How Excessive Care for Worldly Welfare may Impair that Welfare.

Volume 2: Section 3: How Americans Understand Equality of the Sexes

10 3 Oct Mon

Slavery, Temperance, and Women
Read Cummings, Chapters 19, 20, 21, 25 & 26

Also Read: *Mysterious, Brilliant Frederick Douglass*

Available on Oaks

General Guidance

The nineteenth century is notable for the coalition formed by the abolitionists, women's rights (suffrage) and temperance movement. That coalition collapses after the Civil War—which met the goals of the abolitionists. Women's rights began to gain its own voice and the temperance movement as well. Initially, the temperance movement was just against excessive drinking, but, starting in England in the 1830's began to radicalize and push for teetotalism (complete abstinence). Women's rights organizations succeeded with nineteenth amendment and teetotalers with the eighteenth. Though not entirely the case, they all shared a moral underpinning. Let's discuss that.

11 5 Oct Wed

Calhoun

Read: *A Disquisition on Gvoernment*
Available on Oaks

General Guidance

The full text *Disquisition* is 47 pages. That is what I want you to read. Calhoun's defense of slavery notwithstanding, he was perhaps our most systematic, direct political thinkers and his insights are important.

12 3-Oct Mon

Herman Melville: Our greatest political thinker?

Read: *Bill Budd: Fortopman. Summary*
Available on Oaks

I very much encourage you to read this book (there is a pretty good movie, starring Peter Ustinov as well), but you should at least read the summary and come with questions.

Also:

Find on the Net summaries of two other Melville novellas:

Benito Cereno

Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street

A full .pdf of *Beneto Cereno* can be found at:

<http://pinkmonkey.com/dl/library1/benito.pdf>

A full .pdf of *Bartleby: The Scrivener* (which is about 25 pages long) can be found at:

<http://moglen.law.columbia.edu/LCS/bartleby.pdf>

You can watch a short movie of this on You Tube:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yUBA_KR-VNU

General Guidance

I realize that including Melville in this course is not part of most all American Political Thought courses...but if you actually take the time to read all of these they are worth more than one class.

That will be your choice as I have only set this one day to discuss them. By far, the best known is *Billy Budd: Foretopman*. I expect that if you seek information/interpretations of it on the Web that you will soon find out that it has been pretty much highjacked by those in the English discipline and the common interpretation is that Budd is a symbolic Christ-like figure, Claggart is, of course, evil incarnate and the Devil. Yet I argue this is wrong. There is just too much in the book that suggest Melville intended it to be a fictional interpretation of liberal political theory. *Benito Cereno* is more straightforwardly political—an observation on slavery and the Hegelian master-slave dialectic. *Bartleby: A Story of Wall Street* gives itself away in the title. As you review, try to think of how or have questions about how these fit in this course on American Political Thought.

13 5-Oct Wed

A Maturing of America
Read: Cummings, Chapters 22, 29, & 38

Also read:

Thorstein Veblen's Critique of the American System of Business

Found at:

<http://understandingsociety.blogspot.com/2013/11/thorsten-veblen-critique-of-american.html>
and

Economic Inequality: It's Far Worse Than You Think

By Nicolas Fitz

From a March 2015 issue of *Scientific American*

Found at:

<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/economic-inequality-it-s-far-worse-than-you-think/>

Finally,

Read enough on the Net to know why the Interstate Commerce Commission was created.

General Guidance

By the middle of the nineteenth century those insightful enough were able to discern some of negative dimensions of capitalism—a political issue that persists until today. No one much disputes that we have had periods of excessive abuse of the system of private ownership of the means of production. Though there was plenty of precedent, in many ways 1887 can be viewed as a watershed in American political thought in that (with the creation of the Interstate Commerce Commission) the government started to intervene in the market. In the same way, 1980 can be viewed as a watershed in that it signaled the rise of neo-conservatism (or actually, neo-liberalism) with the election of Ronald Reagan. What should be the government's role in the economy?

14 10-Oct Mon

Social Darwinism, Eugenics, and Improvement of the Species

Read: Cummings: Chapters 33, 34, 35, & 36

General guidance

This is all in some ways a logical culmination of Adam Smith...and a final refutation of Karl Marx. How so?

15 12-Oct Wed

Science and Politics

Read: Cummings: Chapter 48

and

Minds like machines

Found at:

<http://www.economist.com/node/21538698>

General Guidance

Alexander Hamilton wanted a national bank because he believed that only a mega-institution could finance the things necessary to boost the United States into the industrial age that had already emerged in Great Britain. Generally, Americans have associated “progress” with technological achievements. Think about that and the growth of expertise in the twentieth century and its role in government decision-making.

If you ask me who the most influential man in the world was in the twentieth century, I would likely end up choose Frederick Winslow Taylor. What do you think the impact of scientific management has been?

16 17-Oct Mon

Rise of the Administrative State

Read: Cummings, Chapter 49 & 71

Woodrow Wilson: *The Science of Administration*

Found at:

http://www.commentary.com/admin_thoughts_1887.pdf

and

Chevron U. S. A. Inc. v. Natural Resources Defense Council, Inc.

Found at:

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/1983/82-1005>

and

Ronald Pestritto: *The Rise of the Administrative State*

Found at:

<http://www.heritage.org/research/reports/2007/11/the-birth-of-the-administrative-state-where-it-came-from-and-what-it-means-for-limited-government>

and

Gary Lawson: *The Rise of the Administrative State*

Found at:

<http://www.nesl.edu/userfiles/academics/Friedman/THE%20RISE%20AND%20RISE%20OF%20THE%20ADMINISTRATIVE%20STATE.pdf>

General guidance

This is, in many ways, a continuation of the preceding class. How much power should non-elected bureaucrats have. Beyond saying the president has the power to “appoint” officials, the Constitution is silent on this issue.

18 19-Oct Wed

From Roosevelt to Reagan and Now?
Read, Cummings: Chapter 52

And

John T. Harvey: *What You Should Love Government Deficits*

Found at:

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/johntharvey/2012/07/18/why-you-should-love-government-deficits/#a74d03d13519>

and

Henry Aaron: *The Ultimate, Definitive Guide to the Budget Deficit*

Found at:

<https://newrepublic.com/article/118284/deficit-isnt-big-problem-right-now-economist-henry-aaron-says>

General guidance

This one should be evident. Come prepared to discuss.

19 24-Oct Mon

From past to present: African Americans
Read: Cummings, Chapters 42, 51 & 61

And

Booker T. Washington: *Speech to the Atlanta Cotton States and International Exposition*

Found at:

<http://americanradioworks.publicradio.org/features/sayitplain/btashington.html>

General guidance

The plight of African Americans has once again risen to catch the public eye. This class will be on the history.

20 26-Oct Wed

Present

Read:

SCOTUS Decision: *Shelby County v Holder*

Found at:

<https://www.oyez.org/cases/2012/12-96>

And

US Court of Appeals, Fourth Circuit decision # 16-1468

Found at:

<http://www.ca4.uscourts.gov/Opinions/Published/161468.P.pdf>

General guidance

What can we do? What should we do?

21 31-Oct Mon

Women's Rights in Modern Times
Read Cummings, Chapter 67

Assignment:

Find information about the current state of women in the US and come to class prepared to discuss it.

22 2-Nov Wed

Class Choice

23 7 Nov Mon **FALL BREAK**

24 9-Nov Wed

Group 1 Presentation

25 14-Nov Mon

Group 2 Presentation

26 16-Nov Wed

Group 3 Presentation

27 21-Nov Mon

Group 4 Presentation

28 23 NOV WED **THANKSGIVING**

29 28 Nov-Mon

Group 5 Presentation

30 30 Nov-Wed

Group 6 Presentation

31 5 Dec-Mon

Wrap-up

Class Requirements:

Three papers will be due—these will be no more than six typed pages, 1” margins, double-spaced, 12 point Times New Roman font.

- An in-class group presentation is required. (See below)
- The first paper is due Sept and must be submitted before that day’s class starts. Submission will be in a designated drop box on Oaks. Later papers will be penalized.
- The second paper will be due by the beginning of class on
- A final research paper will be due Sunday, Dec , no later than 12 PM It will serve as your final exam. This should be ~ 12-15 pages.

For all papers, follow APA style—but you do not need a running header.

I will give you a question for the first two papers. The last paper will be a topic of your choosing that must be approved by me in advance. It will effectively be a term paper.

Guidance for group presentations:

The topic you choose for your group presentation can be any that is relevant to this course—for example an in-depth discussion of a specific person or persons or a relevant topic (contemporary or historical).

You must get my approval for your topic.

The group must meet with me no later than Nov 3 to go over your presentation.

The grade you get will be based on coherence and continuity—in other words, you should not expect to come together and present in an uncoordinated or discontinuous fashion. You should rehearse your presentation at least once before your class date. How you present is your choice—whether you choose to rotate among members or have each member go in sequence.

Your grade will largely be based on my judgment of the effort the group has put into it.

I suspect that most of you will want to use PowerPoint or Prezi. That is okay, but consider reading at any of multiple websites that argue PowerPoint makes you stupid. If you do use and misuse it, you will be penalized. There are multiple websites on how to use it effectively. Here’s just one:

https://lbj.utexas.edu/21cp/syllabus/powerpoint_tips2.htm

Especially important is to know that you should use blank slides—we should not be staring at material on the screen for your entire presentation.

Do not just “read” your slides. They should supplement your presentation and not be your presentation. Do not just “read” your presentation from note cards. You certainly can use them, but should be familiar enough with what you will say that you can look at your audience and explain things to them.

Restrict your use of any videos. Understand that this is your time and not Stephen Colbert’s. Overuse of videos will be penalized.

If any group has problems with one member (not attending meetings, not staying in touch, etc.) then let me know. You do have the power to vote any group member out and they will lose their presentation points...effectively one letter grade.

Grades will be apportioned according the following:

Group project:	10%
Test 1:	25%
Test 2:	25%
Term paper	40%
Class participation	?

Re class participation: I realize that some of you are simply quieter than others and may choose to listen more than speak. That said, those who do speak and participate are not just value added to it, they are an essential part of it. So, I reserve discretion to reward students who do participate. I will not use this as a tool for subtracting points from the final grade.

Final Grades will be calculated as follows:

93-100 A	90-92 A-
87-89 B+	83-86 B
80-82 B-	77-79 C+
73-76 C	70-72 C-
67-69 D+	63-66 D
60-62 D-	59 and below F

Computers and texting: There will be no open laptops or tablets in class. I consider texting to be the same as talking in class—call me old-fashioned if you will, but it is discourteous to me as well as your classmates. Moreover, there is ample experimental evidence that you cannot do two things at the same time . . . if you are texting, you are only paying partial attention to class. So, no texting is permitted either. Violation of either of these rules will result in punishment at my discretion.

Center for Disability Services: Students Needing Access Parity (SNA)

The College will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented disabilities. Students should apply for services at the Center for Disability Services/SNAP located on the first floor of the Lightsey Center, Suite 104. Students approved for accommodations are responsible for notifying me as soon as possible and for contacting me one week before accommodation is needed.

Academic Support Services—The Center for Student Learning

The CSL, located on the first floor of the library, offers a wide variety of tutoring and other academic resources that support many courses offered at the College. Services include walk-in tutoring, by appointment tutoring, study strategies appointments, Peer Academic Coaching (PAC), and Supplemental Instruction (SI). All services are described and all lab schedules are posted on the CSL website <http://csl.cofc.edu/> , or call 843.953.5635 for information.

Honor code: I expect you to adhere to the College’s honor code. Violation of this code is serious and can result in your expulsion or the awarding of an administrative “F” for the course. More information can be found at:

<http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/>

I strongly encourage you to visit:

http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_what_is_plagiarism.html

This site will familiarize you with issues of plagiarism.

You have a very powerful tool/technology called the Internet to aid you in your research. Actually, the Internet, as it is alone, is pretty useless even though it is filled with information. The actual powerful tool you have is access to a search engine (likely Google and Google Scholar). Without Google, the content of the Internet would be simply a ‘blooming, buzzing confusion” (William James).

In some respects I envy you in having access to this Internet content. In others I do not. The positive side is that in a matter of minutes you can access information that would have taken me hours, if not days, when I was an undergraduate and graduate student (when we walked to school uphill both ways). However, there also appears to be a negative aspect as well—at least for some who are taking a more objective look at the Internet. That is, it is shaping your ways of thinking in ways that may not be altogether positive. Moreover, it may be creating in you the illusion of knowledge rather than the real thing. There are numerous sources that you can find for this. Nicolas Carr’s *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains* is one such book. As one way of thinking about this, I ask you to consider how much of your time is dictated by your devices. If you stop what you are doing to tend to your messages, if you find it difficult to concentrate when you have an unread message, if your hand-held is just about the last thing you look at at night and the first thing in the morning, then you are not using it as a tool. Rather it is better understood as a tool using you.

One final comment about the Internet directed at your use of social media. Time spent communicating via social media—some of you do it when the person you are chatting with is across the table—is not the same as talking to them. It is easier to text than it is to talk and for that reason you should take my challenge to talk more and text less. If you want to read an explanation, read Sherry Turkle’s *Reclaiming Conversation*. The ability to communicate face-to-face will be an essential skill in most work careers and certainly one in living a fulfilling life.